

HUSAIN

The Greatest World Martyr

BY

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This Book is Dedicated
Most Respectfully to the
Great Muslim Devout and Benefactor
NAWAB SALAR JUNG BAHADUR
for his Great and Valuable Services
to Humanity at Large.

Bombay
1942, A. D. }
1360, A. H.

The Author.

Nawab Salar Jung Bahadur

of Hyderabad, (Deccan.)

Nawab Sir Salar Jung,
Right praised by many a tongue!
Thou art the rarest gem,
That gloweth in Deccan's realm;

* * * *

Thou ardent advocate,
Thou staunch and steadfast mate,
Of Islam, Allah's creed!
Thou art a friend in need.

* * * *

Thou Benefactor born!
The needy, the poor, forlorn,
In thee their solace find;
Thou blessed with a broader mind,

* * * *

With a bigger, bountier purse,
Doth glad and free disburse,
In just and righteous ways,
In worthy Cause that pays.

* * * *

Thou of the chosen few,
Art Allah's sergeant true;
His standard bearer proud,
To lead the countless crowd;

* * * *

Thy name and fame shall stand,
In sacred Allah's Land.

A. M. Salmin

FOREWORD.

This beautiful little booklet comes from the able pen of Al-Haj Muhammad Ali Salmin, a well-known writer in the Arabic speaking world. He has wielded his pen with facility in the service of Islam through various Arabic journals. His desire is to serve his community by his pen and I hope and wish him every success.

Muslims, like various other sciences and branches of learning, have also cultivated the science of History and Biography; and in one way I may say they have been the founders of the science. Writing History was not unknown in pre-Islamic days, but the art was dying in the quagmire of fiction. The writers were not the recorders of actualities but they painted their hero according to their own imagination with few facts of his life. They did not depict the hero as he was, but they portrayed him as they wished him to be according to their own likeness and opinion. The Muslims saw the defect and tried to give true picture of the persons they were writing upon. Again, they were not much interested in the life story of their hero and they omitted all such things from their narration that could apply to other people as well. They only dwelt on such part of his character that they may act as a moral objective lesson to their readers. The Quran in fact taught them this method. This Muslim system of writing History has recently been adopted by European Historians.

With this point in view, the Al-Haj has written these pages. Husain's life discloses a unique chapter in the history of the world. He is the first martyr to democracy. The tragedy he met with is too painful to be repeated by me. He did not give his life in claiming the heritage that should have come to him as a descendant of the Prophet, but he fought for the principle which the usurpation of Yazid had violated. Islam has rightly been called the "Father of Democracy." The faith reformed all branches of human activities and brought them on democratic principles. Islam dealt a death blow to the old system of government that believed in Divine rights of certain families. It demolished all barriers of accident and birth and made the rule of the country open to one who could satisfy the demands of the public. In short, Islam taught that a ruler of human destiny should be chosen by election and not by succession. The Holy Prophet taught the principle and for four generations his successors followed the same doctrine. But the principle was too high for the people to follow it. Amir Muavia made departure from it, and managed to see his own son Yazid as his successor.

The Great martyr, who is the hero of these pages would not pay allegiance to the kingship of Yazid simply because the kingship of the latter was a heresy to Islam. Even at the eve of his death when a handful member of his family were in the teeth of death, he would not bow down to any temptation. He stuck to his principles and

gave his life in the interest of democracy.

No tree of reformation developed into fruition without being irrigated by the blood of the martyrs. Islam introduced very many reformations in each department of human activity. It revolutionised all principles of life. And each reformation required a separate sacrifice. To turn the system of monarchial Government into that of democracy was not an easy task. Though the Holy Prophet succeeded in the task yet lust and desire would go against the noble work of the Prophet and some one had to give his life against the heresy. Who else than Husain should come forward for the dangerous duty? In the great martyr we find the top specimen of patience, endurance and aloofness from wordly matters. He died with more than 30 wounds on his body. He had no hope of the least success while every promise of facility and comfort was offered to him. I wonder if the historians of the coming days could find exception in his acceding to the wishes of Yazid but he would not do as he could not go against the wishes of his grand father—the Holy Prophet and the will of the Lord; it needed a big sacrifice and he excelled all other mortals of the world in doing so.

It is not a reformation that needs sacrifice but ampleness in prosperity and in everything that is good needs a sacrifice for its achievement.

There is a beautiful chapter in the Quran the shortest of all chapters, which though shortest of

all other chapters but pregnant with wonderful precepts to achieve the best of prosperity. It is named *Al-Kausar*. The word Kausar according to all Arabic lexicons means the highest of good and prosperity. It may mean the name of certain stream in heaven, the said stream will be only a materialization of what the word means literally. The chapter makes promise of two things. The acquisition of all that is good and the removal of all those who oppose our success. These can be the only objects of life. The word of God guarantees the both but on doing two things, prayers and sacrifices. Prayers as the Quran says index two things, doing all that is good and abstinence from all that is evil. Sacrifice means parting with that we are entitled to possess. The chapter thus teaches us three principles of attaining prosperity:

1. Doing of good action.
2. Eschewing from evil.
3. Giving up of a thing that we may love to possess and we are justified to do so but if higher ends demand our parting with them, it means sacrifice.

The Holy Quran strongly teaches the same principle when it says that we cannot attain any good unless we part with that that is good. No one can deny the value of life. We may be ready to give every other thing if we could save life when it is in danger. In other words life is the thing which we love to possess, and Imam Husain gave the same.

KHWAJA KAMALUDDIN.

The Mighty Husain

The tragedy enacted at Karbala is rightly regarded as the most tragic event of its kind. It has no parallel in the entire history of mankind. It has been a source of inspiration for the whole world of Islam for the past so many centuries. The martyrdom of Hazrat Husain occurred in the plains of Karbala when he was accompanied only by 72 unarmed persons, young and old, men, women and children, as against the forces of the enemy which numbered approximately 20,000 armed to the teeth, with all the weapons in vogue in those days.

The first 10 days of Muharram, in particular, are generally dedicated to weeping and mourning. Sometimes this lamentation is shallow, devoid of everything that may lend to it the colour of profound reality. Yet every person should try to understand why it was that the grandson of the Prophet of God made this extreme sacrifice and resorted to this sort of *jihad*; why it was that he chose to offer himself, his dear and near ones, his friends and small innocent children in sacrifice and why it was that he courted death, accompanied as it was with all kinds of physical afflictions and tortures under the scorching heat of the desert sun. Could he not spend his time in prayers and meditation away from the tumult of the world as is wont of the saints of the day? Why did it not occur to him that Islam was another name for counting prayers on the beads of the rosary and sitting in meditation as is being done by so many of us today? Had not so many other Musalmans of his age shut themselves up from the world, much against the

dictates of their conscience? Hazrat Imam Husain's great sacrifice did not aim at acquiring wealth or winning power or seizing the Khilafat or conquering any country. It was not determined by any mean personal motive. The great sacrifice was made for earning Divine Love, for maintaining the democratic traditions of Islam, for ending tyranny and aggression, for deposing a usurper, an imposter and a worthless Khalifa. How could a true worshipper of God like him and a man of his calibre, nurtured in the lap of the Prophet, run counter to the dictates of his conscience? A law that murders the conscience, cannot command true obedience. That is why Hazrat Imam Husain remained undaunted against Yazid's huge hordes. The latter's material forces could not succeed in vanquishing the inner spirit of the Imam. He remained undefeated.

Hazrat Imam Husain never sought any quarter from the enemy. He cheerfully suffered all the misfortunes and all the afflictions with the sole object of maintaining the prestige and integrity of the Prophet's dynasty.

Hazrat Imam Husain held that the leader and the Khalifa of the Musalmans should conform to the laws of Islam. How could then he recognise Yazid as the leader of the Musalmans when he deliberately nullified every principle of Islam? He was himself a true Musalman and wanted that every Musalman should possess the same enthusiasm of faith and the same love for Islam as he possessed, that he must be conscientious, that he should be a standard-bearer of Islamic purity, an exponent of freedom, a believer in the Islamic traditions of democracy and one serving the cause of the country and the nation at all times. After the Karbala tragedy, Yazid ultimately met with his doom.

The battle-field of Karbala was the scene of fight which for all times to come established Hazrat Imam Husain's victory, for it was the battlefield where freedom, perseverance, patience, toleration and trust in God were demonstrated more than ever. His martyrdom spread consternation and dismay in the world of Islam; it created sentiments of revolt and hatred against the tyrannical rule of some of the Omayyides which ended in their utter destruction. It is, however, worth noting that Nature grants victory always to those who fight on the side of freedom and justice.

Men of the present generation cannot appreciate the great sufferings cheerfully borne by a little band of truth-loving persons at the battle-field of Karbala. Just think of it and visualise before your very eyes the scene with Imam Husain in the battle-field. He has finished burying with his own hands several of his kith and kin. One by one his devoted comrades have fallen; the honour of the women of the family is in the greatest danger. Arrows are showering from all sides. Small little children are crying hoarse for water. But he, as if unmindful of these terrible sights, is continuing the uneven struggle in the cause of truth and for the love of Islam and remarks: "I cannot allow the fair name of Hazrat Fatima's family to be tarnished by showing allegiance to one given to sin and lost to virtue like Yazid."

Hazrat Imam Husain fights his way on to the Euphrates; he is extremely hungry and in spite of excessive thirst he does not want that he alone should quench his thirst while others should remain thirsty. He, therefore, tries to bring water to his tent when on the way some one's arrow wounds his lips and at the same time he hears the report that the tents which

accommodated his holy womenfolk have been set on fire. He at once returns from the Euphrates in great haste. His patience and perseverance are on the anvil of test, but he cheerfully submits himself to the Divine Will. This resolve, this perseverance, this courage, this trust in God, are nothing short of a miracle, unparalleled in the history of mankind.

Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti says:—

“ Husain is the king ; Husain is the Emperor ;
 Husain is religion ; Husain is the mainstay of religion ;
 He gave up his life but did not give his hand in token of
 allegiance to Yazid ;
 I swear by God that Husain is very basis of the holy
 Kalima of Islam.”

The great sacrifice, patience and trust as exhibited by Hazrat Imam Husain have lent lustre to the very structure of Prophethood. God wanted to teach a lesson to the people and to set an example for the guidance of the future generations, otherwise the wrath of God could have easily descended on the tyrants in the very battle-field of Karbala as in days of yore.

Political movements and interests have sometimes assumed the garb of religion with the result that in the Islamic world two great factions, Shiahs and Sunnis, have come into being. But the question of the Khilafat is now no more, nor does the question of succession exist at present. The Abbassides are now no more and similarly the Omayyides are dead and gone. Yet the Shiahs and the Sunnis are quarrelling with unabated fury. Hazrat Imam Husain's ideal in life was above these petty squabbles which are rending asunder the two vital branches of one and the same community.

Every one who wants to understand the high standard of morality and wants to reach the heights of human perfection, whether he be a Muslim or a non-Muslim, a learned man or a lay-man, must draw a lesson from Hazrat Husain's martyrdom and should realise for himself as to what it was which he wanted to resuscitate through his martyrdom.

A lifeless nation like the Arabs was turned into a virile nation by the teachings of the holy Prophet of Islam. Today we no longer possess those sterling qualities which have proved a dread to the enemies of Islam. Islam is not a reactionary religion of orthodox notions; it is still as practicable a code of life as before. But what is then the cause of our degradation? It is our intellectual servitude to Europe, our blindly following others, and our callousness towards Islam. It was this very tendency against which Imam Husain had struggled unto death.

As a rule those who have led, taught and reformed humanity, have always faced huge odds and ordeals which, in their turn, have only helped in bringing out their latent capabilities into stronger relief before the entire world. There would hardly be any instance in the whole history of mankind where any of the great leaders of thought ever led a life of material prosperity. Humanity has always been led by those who drank only Adam's ale, ate dry cakes of bread or who were herdsmen and those who fell a victim to starvation! As long as human beings do not pass through these tough trials, they cannot hope to reach the ideal heights of spiritual perfection.

Even today there exist so many adverse forces which are invidiously praying and have preyed on our religious and political rights. If even now we continue lying like lotus-eaters

we are sure to be doomed. There is a painful lack of persons with true conscience and honesty in our community. We also lack initiative. We do recount the deeds of our forefathers and take pride over our past, but on our own part we are uniformly listless and inactive. It is high time for us to wake up in right earnest. Even now we have, in our midst, men like Yezid and there are before our eyes scenes like the one enacted at Kufa and the heart-rending tragedies like the one perpetrated at Karbala. We have to learn a lesson from all these things. The Quran says:—

“If you be the true believers you will dominate”.

To adopt Imam Husain as an epic hero for elegies and poetic dirges is an outrageous precosity on our part. His sacrifice, unparalleled as it was, is a message of freedom for Islam, a voice to reinforce the whole structure of society. Therefore, it is upto you to tread in the footsteps of that Great Martyr in order to be able to come to the rescue of our decadent community. The unique example set up by Husain has served as the beacon light both for Iran and Turkey during their renaissance and so will it be in our case.

Friends, wake up, give up this supineness, this lethargy, this selfishness, this timidity and the self-crippling inferiority complex which has set in you. It is not difficult to embark on a self-denying mode of life, a life full of trials, tribunals and sacrifices. The Mount Sinai is still there but there is no Moses to receive the Divine Light; the mosques are still there but the burning spirit of Hazrat Bilal is now no more. Wake up, therefore, before it is too late !

Now Coming to the Present Book Itself.

P. 24. The 'report' that Imam Husain was ready to submit to Yazid on condition that if three other persons submitted he would also submit, requires clarification. Authentic Historians are not very keen about this aspect of the report; but all have laid stress upon the unitarian and democratic aspect of it. Imam Husain had clearly asserted that the question of submission and recognition of Yazid was not a personal question with him but was a national one and that he was ready to submit if the whole nation submitted. In my opinion the author should have laid more stress upon the democratic aspect of the question in the above instance.

P. 25. I do not agree with the author of Kashaf. His account is rather misleading. To sacrifice one's all in the cause of Ahl-e-Bait (Immediate Kinsmen of the Prophet) is no doubt a virtue; but to celebrate the great tragedy of Kerbala and to make the martyrdom of Imam Husain an occasion only for lamentation and mourning is, to say the least, to ignore the real significance of that great sacrifice and its teachings which covers both the spiritual and active planes of human progress. Hence the author's view on this vital question is not only exaggerated but somewhat misleading. It is my earnest prayer that the lovers of that great Martyr, realizing the real significance of the sacrifice of Imam Husain, would take to heart the lesson that it has taught to humanity.

P. 25. Islam is quite explicit on the question of Najat (i. e. Salvation) which absolutely discarding personalities, recognises only virtue and good actions, hence the Quran-i-Sharif :—

“Only the abstainers (from evil) are honourable in the sight of God,” clearly defines that the personal affluence and family ties are not the criterion for salvation but virtuous life and good actions only would lead to Najat. I would like to remind thoughtful persons about the ‘tradition’ when the prophet said: ‘O Fatimah; O Safia; It will not be asked on the day of judgement that you were the Prophet’s daughter and his aunt, but virtuous life and good actions only will be recommendations for the salvation of your souls’. The above quoted ‘tradition’ throws a lurid light on the question of ‘Shafa-at’ (Supplication by the Prophet).

In conclusion I would say that the book is not only a very short review of the life of Imam Husain but it is rather incomplete. Many important features lack elucidation and very little has been said about the attainments of Imam Husain, his character, teaching, etc. More References were necessary. The style and language should have been more enlightening and clarified. In spite of the above defects the learned author has taken great pains in compiling this book and his endeavours are indeed praise-worthy. In commending it to the public, I feel sure that it will benefit them.

Bombay:

29th July 1941.

MOHAMMAD TAHER.

The Triumph of Imam Husain.

By **Dr. K. Sheldrake.**

Islam gave to the world the wonderful spirit of Tolerance and Brotherhood at a time when Empires were tearing one another to pieces, and force and hatred were the order of the day, and love and brotherhood had disappeared from the world. Muslims were united into a great Commonwealth by the genius of the last and Greatest of the Prophets, and it was the duty of his family in particular, and of Muslims in general to safeguard the jewels so richly bestowed by Islam upon mankind in every clime. Islam came to breathe the spirit of love into a world of hate. The time came when this great and wonderful Brotherhood had to stand a supreme test. It was a Faith worth living for. Was it a Faith worth sacrificing everything for-including life itself? Was Islam to follow in the footsteps of other creeds and lose its spirituality, or would it remain pure, and Muslims undivided? Husain marched with his little company not to glory-not to power or wealth but to a supreme sacrifice, and every member of that gallant band, male and female, knew that the foes around were implacable, were not only ready to fight, but to kill. Denied even water for the children, they remained parched under a burning sun, among scorching sands, yet no one faltered for a moment, but, bravely faced

the greatest odds without flinching. Other armies had fought, but had fed and watered well before the battle, but on Kerbala the little band of heroes stood suffering the worst pangs of thirst. On came the enemy, and Husain and his followers were as lions. Brave as could be, they hurled buck numbers time after time, but, alas, arrows and spears took their toll of that little band and the ultimate issue could not be doubted. It seemed as though the cause of those who were of the House was lost when Husain finally fell. Those who have studied and experienced spiritual studies know well that at the darkest hour one is richest and elevated more highly than ever could be in the time of ease and prosperity. Our earthly body binds us to the earth, but our heavenly body has no limitation in space or time. How little do people understand of the next life, and of our form when we pass through the thin veil of death? Husain did not die, but simply cast aside his earthly frame, and went on, a sublime martyr of Islam, and with him his faithful warriors and friends. How he looked back upon that stricken field, and how then he realised to the full the joy of release from physical limitations. There is no such thing as death—we simply go forward freed from everything which is earthly. We have our form and we see clearly and understand much that is hidden from us when we are limited with a human frame, and can only see and hear with worldly eyes and ears. From that Field of Kerbala went forth a cry from the blood stained sands which reached to every portion of the

Muslim world, and Islam breathed again, and Truth no longer hid herself but cast aside her mantle and stood forth once more. The spirit of Unity which had also hidden itself for very shame, came forward and was again recognised by the Faithful. Brotherhood was resurrected, and Faith was triumphant. Husain died that his blood might cement the structure of Islam, and that the world might be free and pure. During his life upon this earth he preached love and purity, and from the next existence he sees and hears that his sacrifice has not been in vain. He preached and fought for democracy against tyranny and injustice, and his death is a constant reminder to us to-day that we must follow in his footsteps, and be prepared, if necessary, to cast aside this mortal frame of ours in order to preserve Truth for without Truth nothing can live. Husain triumphed over his enemies by his death, and when Sunni and Shia alike celebrate the Yaum-e-Ashura we join in remembering that great and glorious day when he made the supreme sacrifice. We must fight for truth, for justice, for freedom, against the Powers of Darkness, and we must work for Unity, to bring the entire human family into one great brotherhood, when swords can be sheathed for ever, and when man will love his neighbour.

The story of Kerbala will ring through the ages untill the sunset of time. Not until this planet cools will fervent souls cease to whisper the events of this memorable field. He who had

set upon the knee of Muhammad (May the choicest blessings of Allah be with him and those of his House!) whose baby lips had lisped the ayats on the Final Revelation of Allah to humanity, who had grown like a sapling in the warmth of the sun of the Prophetic care, whose appearance brought a smile to the countenance of Allah's Apostle, he it was who was destined to cement Islam with his own warm life-blood. Shed your tears ye Muslims as ye tell to your children the story of Husain, the Ever Blessed Saint and Martyr. Teach them to live as he did and be prepared to die even as he. Muharram to those who have penetrated the inner Veil means much, and to the uninitiated it also means a great deal. Let us then learned and ignorant gather together to pay our humble tribute to Husain, the Blessed, whose name liveth for evermore.

The outer significance of the wonderful sacrifice is that he gave his life for Unity, for freedom and for truth, and the arrows which pierced his earthly case allowed his pure and sinless soul to free itself from physical strappings, and depart to its destined abode of bliss. The inner significance is that Husain lives and shall yet live. He it is whose beneficent spirit has hovered in the world of Islam, who has entered into sweet communion with those who understood and listened. In the quiet of a starlit night, standing before our desert tent, we hear him in the rustle of the breeze, in the forest we find him in a myriad reflections, amid towns we are

brought to a realisation of him in a thousand ways. Husain! Ye Blessed; Your blood sanctified mankind. Your sacrifice has brought to us that wonderful spirit of self-surrender. A life given for mankind by one so sinless from such sinless parents, and from Allah's Apostle set a seal upon the Revelation, and preserved it in tact to those who understand throughout the centuries. Self-sacrifice, self-abnegation, giving one's all for others, laying down life itself for Truth, such was the action of our Noble Saint and Martyr. No myth is he, not shrouded by the mists of folklore, no semi-pagan deity or being was he, but a personality known to thousands upon thousands of those who called themselves Muslims. In London, when we celebrate the Yaum-e-Ashura, I try to picture my brethern the Divine Spirit breathed by our Beloved Martyr on the fatal yet glorious day. I feel that my unworthy lips cannot hope to deal justly with such a sacred subject. Allah blessed me with the "Light" nearly 32 years ago, when I stood alone, when I had no Muslim to instruct me, and from that time I have been a humble student, and realise that when I have run my earthly span I shall know so little-so very little. Husain, that Blessed one inspired me with the spirit of sacrifice, and I have tried to walk humbly before Allah helping my Muslim bretheren everyday. In the night prayer, and during the dark hours I have remained in an atmosphere of spirituality, and have freed myself from earthly contact, and in 1928 my soul knew such peace as never before. Physical suffering departed, and

I was borne by invisible hands in a state of sweet calm and blessedness. Such happened to me, a poor unworthy mortal, but what happened when the soul of our Saint and Martyr left the human frame? Freedom of movement and expression, peace which mortals cannot understand, and to him who had just left that frame on which his enemies gazed, came sweetness beyond our imagining. The world at large has gained in a manner which is not yet understood, and Hussain the Blessed has left us such a wonderful example which few can hope to emulate. *We need to-day the spirit of Husain to purge the Muslim world of vices which enshroud the minds of the believers. We need Husain to destroy the demon of selfishness and avarice. We need the example of Husain forever before us to regulate our lives so that we may live for other.* When the Muslims resolve one and all that they will live and die as Husain, then Islam in reality will be the religion of humanity. Oh! ye Muslims! search your souls, and say if ye have in truth followed the commands of Allah and his Apostle or have ye walked in the footsteps of Husain.

(*Muslim Review*).
Lucknow.

The Night of Martyrdom.

Black-robed, bare-footed, with dim eyes that rain
Wild tears in memory of thy woeful plight.
And hands that in blind, rhythmic anguish smite
Their blood-stained bosoms, to a sad refrain
From the old haunting Legend of thy pain,
Thy votaries mourn thee thro' the tragic night
With mystic dirge and melancholy rite
Crying to thee Husain ! Ya Husain !
Why do thy myriad lovers so lament ?
Sweet saint, is not thy matchless martyrhood
The living banner and brave covenant
Of the high creed thy Prophet did proclaim
Bequeathing for the word's beatitude
Th' enduring loveliness of Allah's name !

—*Mrs. Sarojini Naidu.*

on him) came and told that, as the Prophet considered Ali to himself what Aaron was to Moses, the name of the sons of Haroon should be the names of the sons of Ali. The Prophet asked the name of Haroon's sons, and the angel gave him as Shabbar, Shabbir, and Mushabbar in order. On inquiring their Arabic meaning the Prophet gave the names of Hasan, Husain, and Muhsin to all the three sons of Ali respectively.

However, names to both the Imams were given in consultation with Gabriel, and no one had claimed these names prior to the Ali's sons' birth. Husain's patronymic name was Abu-Abdullah, and various qualifying titles were attributed to his person, such as Syed, Taiyab, Vali, Mubarak Mardatullah, and Sibt Rasul Allah. Out of the above titles, the most famous and noteworthy is Syed; because* Prophet had granted this title to him and to his elder brother Hasan. And as he was honoured with the title of Syed, he was revered with the title of Sibt as well, for the Prophet on many occasions spoke *"Husainun Sibتون Minal-Asbat".

It is related that Imam Hasan resembled the Prophet from head to breast and Imam Husain

*The Prophet had said that Hasan and Husain were the chiefs of the young-men of Heaven meaning thereby that they are the most revered men in Heaven. (See Bukhari and Muslim.)

*It means that Husain is one of the (worthy) grandchildren.

did from breast to his toe. Yahya the son of Hakam and another party was Husain's poet. Asad of Sanjar was his gate-keeper and his finger ring was decorated with 'Lekulle Ajalin Kitab'.

His character, Conduct and his unparalleled Generosity.

Husain's matchless knowledge of Divinity and Husain's personal superiority is unanimously agreed upon in the vastly extended Moslem world despite the sectarian differences amongst them. His knowledge, his devotion to God, his bravery and generosity, his intelligence and eloquence had attained to perfection, whose detailed narration cannot be given full space in our so concise a work of the Husain's biography. On this account, therefore, we shall attempt to enlighten only certain facts from his life with as much brevity as possible.

His Devotion to God.

The state of his devotion to God was so much that in addition to his prayers or 'Namaz' (the prescribed form of the Moslem Prayers) to his beloved God he offered one thousand 'Nafil' (prayers in acknowledgement to God's kindness and love) more in gratitude to His mercy and kindness. He was so heartily devoted to Allah that he went to offer his pilgrimage on foot to Mecca, precisely to be true, for twenty five times.

His Knowledge and its Practical Execution.

It shall suffice to say of his knowledge and how he practically used it to the best advantage of the followers of his grandfather, the Prophet of Arabia, that he spent his childhood in the company of his saintly grandfather, and his boyhood was replete with the wonderful trainings in various channels of angelic thoughts and activities which received at the hands of his worthiest father, Ali, and various other venerable companions of the Prophet.

His Generosity.

All historians agree that Husain was singularly famous for his hospitality, kindness and caretaking of the helpless and the oppressed, and for his giving alms to the needy and poor. He would support persons with eatables and clothes, who were not able to provide themselves with the same. At times he would give to certain very old men and women one thousand 'derhams' plus one thousand goats.

One day, a man, who was reduced to utter poverty came in the front of Husain's residence and having his camel sat he sent to the generous Husain the following Arabic couplets which when rendered into English mean :—

“I am a helpless man with practically nothing left with me which could carry the lowest price.

Of course, my honour, my family pride, and my self-respect is still with me, which I have tried to save by every possible means as yet. But when I find so saintly and so divine a customer in you, I am anxious to sell it to you."

The person waited a while and repeated his request by sending the following couplets on having received no reply from inside. The translation of the said couplets is:—

"If I go away from so generous a personality as yours without my request fulfilled and if the people ask me what the generous Husain gave me at my request (for to come to your threshold means to return with as much as one desires from you) and if that moment I tell every one that you gave me something it will be a lie. And if I reveal the truth that I returned from you with practically nothing got from you, its revelation, I, for one never like."

The most generous Husain at once sent him ten thousand derhams and the following quatrette in Arabic whose translation in English is thus:—

"O person : thou hast made much haste. And owing to thy haste, I am not able to oblige thee with much. If thou hast given me a little more time, I would have perhaps been able to equal with thy question. I know it is very little, and I hope you will accept it, and think as if thou hast never requested, and I have nothing given to thee."

How bright an example of Husain's generosity the above lines afford to present, and what a great indication of Husain's generous heartedness are they that he would enrich an ordinary mendicant with an enormous offer from him together with an amazing apology of his inability to meet perfectly his mendicant's request in the name of Allah.

It is related by Hazrat Anas that one day the most venerable Husain was presented with a bouquet of flowers by one of his maid slaves. He smelt it, and released the slave from the fetters of slavery on this account. Anas, being surprised, asked Husain as to why he let away such a beautiful slave for so insignificant an offer. Husain replied: "O Anas: do you not know what Allah says in his most reverential book:— "And when you are greeted with greeting, greet with a better (greeting) than it or return it; surely Allah takes account of all things."—Holy Quran IV: 88.

The only best present to her could be what I have done for the pleasure of God."

Clemency and Forgiveness.

Shaikh Abdulhaq, a great traditionist of Delhi, writes* "that one day the most respected Husain was sitting at his served dinner and a female slave was standing beside with a cup full

*The History of the Twelve Imams.

of water almost over the head of the Imam. Accidentally the cup fell from her hand and broke to pieces. Husain looked at her in anger, whereupon she at once recited the following verse§ “Walka Zeminal Ghaiza—And those who restrain (their) anger.” Husain replied “Kazamatu Ghaizi—I got it cooled down”. The slave read the second portion of the verse* “Wal Aafina Anannaas i. e. And those who restrain (their) anger and pardon men”. The Imam answered “Afooto Anka” “I forgave thee.” The slave then completed the verse by uttering† “Wallaaho Yuhibbul Muhseinin..... and Allah loves the doers of good (to others).” The Imam at this cried out: “I liberate thee from the slavish strings which attach thee to me.”

The Golden sayings of the Sublime Imam.

It is traditionally related that the Imam was very eloquent. His speech was as such that nobody would dare interfere in the midst thereof. Generally such sentences were alive at the tip of his tongue as: “O people, strive to attain excellence and perfection, and be always ahead in accumulating such riches that Allah and your conscience allows. Make haste to get the aforesaid, for attainment of superiority means achievement of riches.” Sometimes he would say that beggar’s coming to us due to their need is one of the best blessings

§The Holy Quran, iii 133.

*†Quran, iii 133.

of God. To gratify desire of the helpless is a virtue, and whosoever adopted a generous habit would be exalted in both the worlds but the man practising miserliness would be dealt with vice-versa.

Virtues and Qualities.

Let it be known to every one that the *Holy Prophet was extremely loving his two grand children, Hasan and Husain; hence every Moslem is bound too to love them. It is given in the Holy Qur-an: † "Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for relatives." Now it is evident that no one was more beloved to the Prophet amongst his relatives than both the Hasans, because the Prophet had adopted them his sons. Hence no one else from the Prophet's family deserves as much love from the Moslems as the two grand children of the Great Prophet.

The Prophet says:—

"Love God, so that every morning you may pay gratitude to him for His kindness, love me on account of God's love, and love my relatives on account of me."

*The Holy Prophet had adressed Ali Ibn Abu Talib—the father of Hasan and Husain, in the following words: "Ali! thou art from me and I am from thee." See Bukhari 1st. part page 372, line 9. The same has been spoken of by the Prophet for Hasan and Husain. All agree to this.

†Al-Qur-an XLII: 23.

It is related by the author of "Kashshaf" that the Prophet once said that the people ought to be aware that whoever would sacrifice his life for the sake of the descendants of Muhammad would always pass his life without the least tremor of his heart for the love of the Prophet's children will strengthen firmness of his love for the Prophet and consequently for God, which will implant firmly as its turn, courage and fortitude in the man concerned to defy difficulties of any magnitude and consequently to pave a way for a successful career for himself with his undaunted courage and an almost illimitable and exhaustive dogged pursuit to which he would naturally get inured.

The Prophet says that there would be four kinds of people on the Day of Judgment for whom he shall intercede. First, that group of men who would respect his progeny. Second, that group who would help them in their need. Thirdly, that group who would never let their mistakes public. And fourthly, that group who would love them (the Prophet's family) with their whole heart.

Again the Prophet says,* "I leave two things with you, first, the book of God and second my children and their offspring. If you stick to both firmly, you shall never go astray after me."

It is traditionally related by Ali that the prophet once said that whoever did not respect

* This tradition is universally accepted both by the Shiahs and the Sunnies.

my family and offspring and oppress them would never go to paradise, it is certain.

The Prophet's Love for His Grand-Children.

It is said that one day the Prophet was delivering a Friday sermon while standing over the pulpit of his mosque. The sermons were not yet over, when his two grand-children, Hasan and Husain came in red clothes. They entered the Mosque court, but they were not able to ascend the steps which led to the mosque proper; and it was feared that they would fall down owing to their infancy if they were not timely prevented. The prophet noticing it at once descended from the pulpit and carried them both by his hands. He next got them seated besides him, and said: "Verily, what Allah says is true that our children and our belongings are the greatest test for us. When I saw my children that they were on the verge of falling over the ground, I grew at once impatient until I suspended my preachings and carried them hither."

Anas (a Prophet's companion) says that once some body asked whom the Prophet loved most out of his family and children. The Prophet replied that he loved Hasan and Husain most. The Prophet sometimes would ask Fatimah to bring "His Sons," and when the two children came, he would smell and kiss their lips and hug them to his breast with great love. It is alleged that once the Prophet said too that his body was

a garden, and Hasan and Husain were two flowers in it.

One day the two children came running to Allah's Prophet, and he picked them up in his lap and under his armpit separately, and spoke, "I love them, O God, and wish Thy love for them and for those who love them."

When Islam commenced to accumulate victory after victory, and booty was there in abundance, Omar—the Second Caliph placed all the booty for exhibition on a leather piece. Presently Imam Hasan came and said: "Omar, whatever booty Allah has given to the Moslems, please give my share to me out of it." Omar used many good and kind words for him and gave him one thousand "Dirhams." Soon Imam Husain came, and he too got one thousand Dirhams for his share. But when Omar's own son, Abdullah came and demanded his own share, he got only 500 dirhams.

Abdullah asked his father why such an injustice was done to him, when he was so strong and courageous and participated in many battles along with the Prophet. He next added that he fought for the Moslems at a time when Hasan and Husain were playing and still they were given one thousand dirhams whereas he was given only 500. Omar said, "My Soul, if your grandfather and uncles from either side of your parents are as noble and worthy as Hasan and Husain's, you

will also get as much as they got. And if not, your demand will be too big to be worth consideration." At this Abdullah observed silence and spoke no more.

The Position of Husain.

In the above whatever has been stated in support of the capabilities and amiable rights of Husain and his respected worthy elder brother, Hasan, it seems to be essentially necessary to enumerate in brief the "Whys" and "Whens" in support of Husain's super-position which he so holds for himself in the Islamic history, and which will go in frankness of his ruthless martyrdom in the eyes of his keen critics in any age. One day the Prophet of God had seated Husain on his right thigh, and Abraham his own son, on the left, when Gabriel came after his usual compliments to the Prophet and stated that Allah would not keep the two together, and one of the two He will sooner reclaim. Then the Prophet was entitled to have his choice of keeping with him either of the two. And strange enough, soon after the Prophet's choice for Husain Abraham passed away the third day. The Prophet at this occurrence always pressed his lips against Husain's with an unbounded joy, when the latter came to the former, saying that he was his treasurer left at the cost of his own dear son.

It is said that one day the Prophet went from the house of Aaysha, his wife, to the house of

Fatimah, his most beloved daughter, where he heard the tearful cries of Husain. On this he said to Fatimah in grief: "Do you know I feel much injured at the cries of Husain."

Baraa, the son of Aazib says, that he witnessed in person that the Prophet actually had Husain sit on his shoulder with the prayerful words on the Prophet's lips: "God, I love Husain Thou shouldst love him too."

It is a matter of great consideration that when he was mentally tortured at the sight of the weeping of Husain, how most tormented would his soul have felt at the merciless slaughter of his beloved grandson at Karbala.

Varieties of Martyrdom.

It must be noted that Divine sacrifice or martyrdom is of two kinds. One is hidden and the other is public. Hidden martyrdom is that of which people may not be aware in general, and the reality of which may be doubtfully accepted, since its fundamental causes are mystically concealed from the brains of common people. And public martyrdom is that whose execution is done with a general proclamation, when the ruthless killing is actually carried out before a large gathering of human masses. The murder of Imam Hasan falls therefore to the former category, whereas the martyrdom of Imam Husain falls to the latter kind.

The learned people in Islamic ethics hold as their view that the greatest Prophet of Arabia was granted by Allah every excellence and perfection in its most superior form with the exception of martyrdom due to certain reasons as it was feared that not only it would have been derogatory to the dignity of Islam, but detrimental too to the welfare of it. So in order to attain this perfection, God gave him a chance in Husain's martyrdom, as Husain was his great and adopted son.

The Prophetic Anticipation of the Karbala Tragedy long before its Actual Occurrence.

Since the Martyrdom of Husain was not an indirect occurrence of Divine mystery, it was known long before to the Prophet and "there-through" to Fatimah. Ali and many companions of the Prophet. Hence it is not strange to a reader of an average capacity to know that Husain himself was pre-informed of the ruthless decapitation of his own-self.

Aaysha says that the Prophet told her, Husain, his son, would be slain beside a river.

It is narrated by the wife of Abbas, that she saw a dream which was interpreted by the Prophet that Fatimah would give birth to a child, who would grace your lap for some time. Accordingly Husain was born and the Prophet's interpretation turned out true to the letter. The wife

of Abbas brought Husain on her lap and delivered him into the Prophet's hand. In a moment when she turned her eyes to the Prophet's cheeks, she found they were interwoven with pearly tears. In an utter astonishment and loss of understanding the justifiability of the untimely streaming of the Prophet, with full respect and reverence she wanted an explanation. The Prophet tearfully replied that Gabriel has informed him of his followers' thirst for the innocent blood of Husain and that after his death they would slay him with their own hands.

Omme Salmah, the daughter of Sa'ad is said to relate that Gabriel came in her own presence to inform the Prophet of the ruthless slaughter of Husain, and that he would be slain on the Iraqi field by the inhabitants therefrom.

The son of Asaakir says that Gabriel showed some earth of the slaughter field of Husain to the Prophet and said that the Divine wrath is boundless over the slayer of Husain, and that no one is more condemned in the court of God than he.

Baghvi and the son of Saku says that once the Prophet spoke that his Husain would be martyred on the field of Karbala in Iraq, and whosoever of them might be then present, he should take it to be his duty to obey and support Husain in every possible way.

In short there are hundreds of such authentic

reports that bear attestation to the fact that the tragic event of Husain was long before passed to the knowledge of his most beloved Prophet by the Almighty Allah.

The Cause of Slaughter.

If we wish to know why occurred the slaughter of most sublime Husain, why moved the Moslems themselves the edge of their swords against the most delicate throat of him, and why they slew with a limitless baseness and heartlessness his relatives and companions, we shall have to take ourselves to those unpleasant occurrences which ended their tale so dramatically at the most stunning tragedy of Karbala.

It is known almost to every man of historical knowledge that after the martyrdom of Ali six months had hardly passed that Hasan, the elder brother of Husain, had made peace with Muavia, father of Yazid, on certain terms with a view to avoid fight between the two Moslem parties. Two items of this treaty were most important. The first one was that the children of Ali would not be harassed any way and that they would be entitled to stay anywhere with their effects, life and honour. The second item which was more important of the two asserted that the question of caliphate would be given over to the Moslems in general at the death of Muavia, giving them the right of election for the same at the same time.

The Peace treaty which Imam Hasan cited is as follows :—

“ Bismillah—Hir Rahman—Nir Rahim.”

“ In the name of Allah, the Beneficent the Merciful.”

“ Imam Hasan, son of Ali has made peace with Muavia son of Abu Sufian, on this condition that he should act in accordance with the prescribed principles in the Holy Quran, and with the injunctions of the Prophet and his four caliphs; but this peace treaty would never legalise for Muavia to nominate anyone as his successor for the caliphate, after his death. To the contrary it orders him to submit his kingdom to the will of general Moslems who will have the right to install anyone as caliph and confer the absolute authority on him All Moslems belong to Allah and are hereby entitled to settle anywhere as Syria, Iraq, Hedjaz, and Yeman etc., with safety and harmony, especially those who are the members, male or female, child or old of Ali's family.

Muavia should accept and stand firmly by the provisions of this treaty believing in the God's own presence so that he should never dare turn faithless to my brother Husain, and the Prophet's family and its other young and old members and practice his underhand or open dealings with treachery on them. These people should not be troubled anyway and that they should be allowed

to pass their time without fear or apprehension for their lives."

Muavia signed the treaty with great approval but after the death of Imam Hasan he began to act against certain items provided in the treaty. It was clearly stated in the documentary papers pertaining to the treaty that Muavia was not entitled for the nomination of his successor after his death, but to the contrary it would be his duty to hand over the question for a general election to the Moslem in common. Despite we find that he partially violated the treaty and began to demand allegiance from the people to his son, Yazid, as his heir-apparent. This for the most part he did either by making fat payments of money, land and riches to certain people, or by awing some of them into submission.

In order to show a detailed plan of his activities in favour of his son we shall commence with a chronological narrative of the same, when, he initiated his methods by introducing his son, Yazid, in 50 A. H. to the syrian people and inducing them to a great success for their obedience to him. Just the same year he, then appointed Marwan the son of Hakam as Governor of Madina and asked him to induce all the Madinites to accept Yazid as their caliph after the death of his father. Marwan who was the main cause of Usman's murder, the third caliph, had an extremely malicious heart and bore a venomous enmity towards the "Ahlul Bait" (offspring of

Hazrat Ali,) convened a meeting of all the respectable lords and gentlemen together with the common Moslems and addressed them in a ceremonial speech for the object of winning their loyalty for the son of Muavia, whose notoriety was widespread amongst the Moslems who were fully informed of his most abominably sinful behaviour. He alluded in his speech to the way adopted by the first two caliphs, Abubakr and Omar and requested his audience to follow the example by accepting the Yazid's nomination by his father.

On this Abdur Rahman, the son of Abubakr, got fiery and with great resentment stood up with: "O Merwan, this was not the conduct of Abubakr and Omar's caliphate. To the contrary it was the way of Kaiser and Noshirwan. Abubakr and Omar never nominated their sons for the caliphate as their successors". This opportune, spirited speech delivered by Abdur Rahman disillusioned the illusive reference made by Merwan, who soon after the dissolution of the meeting wrote all what was said by Abdur Rahman to Muavia.

In 51 A. H. the following year, Muavia came to Mecca for the same object of cutting the mentality of the people into an obedient acknowledgement of the legality of his son's rights to the caliph's throne, and submission of their undisputed allegiance on that account of him after Muavia's death. When Muavia finished his pilgrim-ceremonies at Mecca, he at once invited Abdullah, the son of Omar for discourse. During his

interview with Omar's son he reminded him of his once spoken when the latter had "the night when you have no ruler to administer and look after your affairs, sleep shall not be your lawful share". The significant meaning of it was that a ruler is more than necessary at every moment and that obedience from the people to him is perfectly essential. Muavia concluded that he was afraid of the son of Omar would turn to be the cause of sprinkling the seeds of dissensions and disunity amongst the people.

Abdullah the son of Omar, after having praised Allah and his worthy Prophet eulogistically said in reply:— "Muavia, those, who have resigned prior to you as caliphs, had their own sons alive who were far better and far nobler than your son. The sons of those Caliphs, thank God, are still alive, and can't be deprived of their preference over Yazid. The preceeding caliphs did not nominate their sons as their successors to caliphate, who were learned, proficient and experienced but they placed in the hands of General to decide such an important case, who, then in their turn appointed properly an able man by election. They could be more deserving than Yazid, who had love for Allah in their heart, whose ins and outs were equally bedecked with righteousness and piety, and who are given preference by all the Moslems owing to their vast learnings and proficiency in various matters. In regard to Muavia's apprehensions that he would disobey the choice of the general Moslems and

launch them on a field of distress and calamity, the son of Omar said that he would never do so; on the other hand he would agree with all the Moslems on whatever their would-be unanimous occurrence, since he was only an ordinary Moslem, rather he was a slave of Moslems considering it to be his duty to serve them for their good for the sake of Islam and its founder. Muavia on this abruptly replied: "God may bless you, O son of Omar."

After this Abdur Rahman, the son of Abubakr was called upon with whom the same topic was held for discourse. Abdur Rahman cut short the speech of Muavia and said that he ought not to have entertained the slightest idea of Yazid's caliphate, and that he ought to have left this question absolutely to the will of his Moslem subject in general so that whatever they should think expedient for the concerned question ought to be done to the great pleasure and satisfaction of the whole Islamic world for the obvious reason of its legitimate conductiveness for the general welfare of Islam. And this having said Abdur Rahman immediately went away.

Lastly Muavia called up Abdulla, the son of Zuber, and said: "Well, please, since you play against us a fox-like policy with your extreme cunningness, it is quite obvious that it is you who are responsible for the rebellious attitude of Abdulla and Abdur Rahman, the sons of Omar and Abubakr respectively". Abdullah son of Zuber,

was a great diplomatist and statesman, so he said " Muavia, if you so wish as to raise Yazid to the most exalted position of Caliph, you should renounce the throne in his favour, and bring Yazid to the Moslem masses so that they all may pledge their faith to him. But if you are not prepared to act as I advise, it will mean a pledge to two caliphs at the same time, which shall group two antagonistic powers to the great disadvantage of the Moslems. By God a pledge of two caliphs at the same time will never be legitimate at any time." Having so said Abdullah, the son of Zuber, got up and moved away.

Still Muavia devised a plan, and having delivered a sermon, he said, in addition to the Moslem Masses that it was proved then that Abdullah-Omar, Abdur Rehman-Abubakr and Abdullah-Zuber were not willingly disposed towards a pledge for Yazid and that they were whole heartedly willing to offer what was asked of them for Yazid. He, therefore, finally continued as a request to all the Moslems present that they should also be willing to swear their allegiance to the nominated future Caliph. The people of Hedjaz gave their retort that unless the three did so openly they would prefer to slay them at once.

When those people came out of the hall they asked Abdullah Omar, Abdullah Zuber, and Abdur Rahman Abubakr if they had pledged their faith to Yazid. They unanimously replied in the negative. Soon after this meeting Muavia went

back to the Capital, and having reached there he commenced to manoeuvre against the persons who did not stand for his policy and ultimately succeeded in inducing the people of Syria to accept Yazid as their future Caliph.

Soon after his material success in his projects in Syria, Muavia wrote letters to governors of the surrounding countries for their acceptance of Yazid as their future ruler. Temptation for riches, or, otherwise, terrific means to strike panic amongst the huge masses of Islam served well for Muavia to return huge masses of Islam to a forced obedience to his notorious son. It is also traditionally related that when Muavia asked Abdur Rahman Abubakr for his pledge, he gave the same reply which he had given to Marvan, the governor of Madina. That Muavia ought not to revive the practices in force during the period of Kaisar and Noshirvan, rather he should entrust it to the Moslems in general so that the question of Caliphate might be decided by the conjoint effort of all.

However, Muavia did not stop from the utility of his tactics, and on his advent in Syria his very first move was to win over the Syrians for their unconditional pledge to his son's Caliphate. His next move towards the same direction was to send letters to the governors of all the provinces and surrounding countries ordering them thereby to exact the same pledge in their respective jurisdictions no matter of what social positions they were,

through every possible means legitimate or illegitimate. Every one as a result of his 'Royal' inducement rallied under the banner of Temptation.

All the above narrations evidently express that not only did Muavia violate the treaty, but despite the practice initiated by the Prophet and observed by his immediate Caliphs he re-introduced the ancient custom of rendering the throne hereditary, disregarding thoroughly the opposition exhibited, by the then living companions of the Prophet. He was then so deeply engrossed in his paternal love for his son, Yazid, that he could care but least for Islam and its welfare, although he was fully aware that his son was never eligible for the position which was so high and sublime that Yazid never deserved it owing to his ill-behaviour, debauchery and extreme sinfulness.

This refusal to accept Yazid's Caliphate and their contradictory remarks against his conduct and character deeply planted the roots of enmity and hatred for them in the greedy head of the son of Muavia, and Yazid began incidently to meditate their murder, if ever got a chance. A second cause is also attributed to his name for the same that he wanted to marry the extremely beautiful wife of Abdullah ibn Zuber (son of Zuber) for whom he intrigued with various persons and at last treacherously got her divorced by her husband. Strange enough that Imam Hasan and Yazid both proposed to her at the same time, and she being

fully aware of Yazid's conduct preferred Hasan for her husband. The result was evidently certain that the inimical feelings of Yazid towards Husain and other persons, who were not prepared to acknowledge his authority, were further intensified.

The Death of Muavia and his advice to Yazid.

Muavia, the son of Abusufian died on the 22nd of Rajab 60 A. H. (Rajab is the 7th month of Islam). A few hours prior to his death Muavia gave some good counsels to Yazid regarding Husain and some other important persons, but it is regretted that Yazid did not care to act in keeping with them. Muavia said to his son that as far it lay within the scope of his power he tried his level best for the caliphate of his son. He defeated all the influentially leading persons of Arabia either by argument or by arms and induced them to offer their pledge for his son's caliphate. But there were five persons who refused to accept Yazid for their caliph; so Muavia imparted certain instructions in regard of those persons, and asked his son to act accordingly.

The first of the quintette was Abdur Rahman, the son of Abu Bakr. He was a saintly person, and was ever busy in his prayerful devotions. Besides, he was a lover of solitude and never cared for earthly fame and gain. So Muavia

advised his son to treat him with kindness and undertake to help him with his needs.

The second of the group was Abdullah, the son of Omar who was also a person of almost similar character, and never after wordly desires. He was also to be treated kindly, Muavia advised his son.

The third person was Abdullah, the son of Zuber and Muavia asked Yazid to slay him if he did not accept his authority.

The fourth of them was Husain, the son of Ali, who was never to be molested at any rate, Muavia pleaded to his son. And that he was ever to be revered and respected by Yazid, as Husain was the grand-child of the Prophet, the founder of Islam. The fifth and the last person of this group was Abdullah, the son of Abbas, concerning whom the words of Muavia have not passed our eyes so far, but it is surmised that of him too Muavia spoke in most commendable terms to his son.

It is given in Tehzeb-ul-Tehzib that Muavia instructed Yazid for a second time and again to respect Husain, the son of Ali, and to love him utmost for his relation to the Prophet, since he was respected and loved by all the people, and warned him that the strength of his power greatly lay in winning the heart of Husain for him.

Yazid's rule and his Exaction of forced allegiance.

Soon after the said demise of Muavia, Yazid was installed on the throne. The Syrians paid their allegiance to him, whereupon Yazid issued mandates to a number of dignitaries and influential persons in various parts of the country. The substance of the contents of these mandates was that Muavia, died, and his son had succeeded him in his stead. That all the people, Husain the son of Ali, Abdullah the son of Umar, Abdullah the son of Zuber, Abdur Rahman the son of Abu Bakr inclusive would pay their homage to him as their over-lord and Caliph for all the Moslems: and in case they failed to do so they should be slain and their heads subsequently sent to his court.

In those days Husain was frequenting his grand-father's (the Prophet,) tomb and generally engaging himself in spiritual devotions there.

Walid, the Governor of Madina, sent for him, and read out the Yazid's Mandate to him. But Husain refused to pledge his obedience to him and returned to his grand-father's eternal abode. At night he saw the Prophet in his dream. The Prophet had placed Husain's head on his thigh and was speaking tearfully "O, son of mine, the comfort of my life, enemies are bent to torment thee in a proximate future, and to slay thee friendless when no loving soul will be around"

Another version of hadith is that when a letter from Yazid came to Walid, the son of Atba, the latter called upon Marvan, the son of Hakam for consultation. Marvan advised Walid to execute the imperial order to the latter. viz., to invite the four persons in question and to slay subsequently if they refused to acknowledge the legality of Yazid's installation. Walid was surprised at such a counsel, and retorted that those persons as such were the most acceptable ones in the court of God, and that every body loved and revered them most. Hence it was not only unwise but foolish to slay them out of their merely earthly emotions.

At length Walid called up Husain to his court. Husain was well aware of the political fermentation in the country against himself. So he took the invitation from Walid most apprehendedly and carried about 50 soldiers armed cap-a-pie with him, whom he stopped at the doors of the court with instructions that if they found Husain in danger they should break in through the gates at once. With this Husain went inside when Walid stood up in his honour and read out Yazid's Mandates to him. Husain said that the letter was addressed to four persons, so it would be better if the other three also were called up for consultation. And if they agreed he as himself would never hesitate to follow their suit. Walid agreed to it but Marvan asked Walid to kill Husain then and there. Having heard this Husain challenged Marvan for a fight, but the coward had no

courage to get up from his seat, for he knew that the sword of the sons of Hashim was world-wide famous for its function. However Husain came back and set out for Mecca, the same night.

Similarly Abdullah, the son of Zuber was called up, but he replied that it was night; the morning following he would add himself to the list of the persons pledged to Yazid. But it was only a trick, for he too started for Mecca in the company of Husain that very night.

Husain's Departure from Medina, to Mecca.

When the evil intentions of Yazid were known to Husain he visited the tombs of Ali, Fatima and the Prophet prior to his departure to Mecca, and expressing a few melancholy expressions departed from them with a painful farewell. The "Medinite" in general and Umme Salma in particular bemoaned at his separation, who rightly apprehended the pending series of calamities for him and an inevitable clash between him and Yazid, the latter being definitely considered by them an absolutely unworthy man and usurper to the caliph's throne. However, Husain went to Mecca with his family and other relations on the 28th of Rajab, the 7th month, according to Arabian lunar calendar.

Invitatory Letter from Koofa and a Move of Muslim Bin Aquil thereto.

With the advent of Husain at Mecca the 'Koofites' learnt that the former had thrown aside Yazid's authority, and was intended to work independently, they wrote a number of letters to Husain inviting him to Koofa with the assurance that thousands were waiting there for his lead. Husain thereupon resolved to go to Koofa, but most of the leading "Meccans" including Abdullah, the son of Abbas, prevented him from going there, reminding him of the repeated infidelity of the Koofites, which they had shown to his father and brother, Ali and Hasan respectively. Further they advised him that if he would not listen to them it would be most expedient to send some friend there first in order to see how the atmosphere prevails there. Husain approved of this counsel very much, and accordingly sent Muslim, the son of Aquil, in advance to study the political feelings of the people and to inform him of it just as it were there.

A few days after, Muslim, the son of Aquil reached Koofa as an emissary of Husain, and stayed at the house of the lover of Husain and his relations. The very first day he set his foot in the town about 12,000 people pledged their faith at his hand for Husain. Observing such a faith of people regarding Husain, Muslim, the son of Aquil, wrote a letter to the former stating all that had happened to him at Koofa, adding that one

hundred thousand people more were ready to pledge themselves at his arrival there.

At last Husain prepared for his journey and was ready for his departure. Abdullah, the son of Abbas, tried to dissuade him from his adventurous journey and requested him not to carry his family at least along with him, but Husain would not abandon his resolution.

The Murder of Muslim and his Sons.

When Koofites commenced to rally under the banner of Muslim for Husain, some parasites of Yazid informed the Governor of Koofa and warned him against it.

Noa-man, the son of Bashir was the Governor of Koofa in those days. He was a good-natured Ansari (A Moslem "Medinite",) and a companion of the Prophet. He said since Muslim had done it secretly, he too would arrest him secretly. In fact it was an evasive policy of Noa-man, for he loved the Prophet and his descendants very much. When the well-wishers of Yazid found that Noaman connived at the actionable activities of Muslim, they informed Yazid of it with exaggeration, and warned if nothing was done soon against it the whole of Iraq would be lost by him.

When Yazid knew it, he felt anxious and consulted with his courtiers. Ziyad the, father of Obeidullah, also was cruel. It was probably due

to the fact that he was born out of wedlock of Aboosufian and a maid-slave. Obeidullah, the son of Ziyad was extremely notorious for his oppression, tyranny and stony-heart. He was in those days the Governor of Basra. Yazid also was not much pleased with him, and wanted therefore, to dismiss him from his post. But at this moment he found it to be much expedient to appoint him as the Governor of Koofa. Accordingly he ordered Obeidullah the son of Ziyad to ask Husain to pledge him to Yazid; and at his refusal to decapitate him and send his head to the capital.

The son of Ziyad received Yazid's mandate at Basra, from where he had hardly started when he was informed that an agent of Husain had also come there. He ordered thereby a search for him and incidently got him captured. A general meeting was convened thereafter in which the son of Ziyad warned the public with a threat that if anybody cherished a desire to join Husain against Yazid, he would be put to an extremely torturous death. At the close of the meeting he killed the agent, and having appointed his own brother in his stead he started off for Koofa.

The arrival of the son of Ziyad at Koofa.

It was between 6 and 8 in the evening when the son of Ziyad arrived at Koofa. At his entrance into the city he had put on his face a sheet of

cloth so that most of the people took him for Husain, because he too was expected there every day. Most of the people thereupon greeted him with As-Salamu Alaikum, O, the son of Prophet.

The son of Ziyad proceeded in silence and went direct to the Governor's residence. Noa-man, the son of Bashir, also thought that he was Husain, so he got all the doors of the official residence and office closed, and from the roof shouted out: "Husain, the son of the Prophet, please for God's sake go back; Yazid will never yield this city to you and I never wish that you should be killed during my administration."

The son of Ziyad at it removed the kerchief from his face and gave a threat to Noa-man, if he did not open the doors. Poor Noa-man did as ordered, and that crowd which had gathered there owing to their mistake in taking the new Governor for the Imam (Husain) immediately dispersed.

Muslim was also informed of the coming of Obeidullah, the son of Ziyad. He therefore went to take his lodging at the house of Hani, the son of Urwa. Next morning Obeidullah Ziyad convened a meeting in which he threatened the people at length urging to break their pledge with Husain or he would reduce them all to nothingness (as he was a widely known oppressor, and a very notorious tyrant). The infidel and coward Koofites lost their courage at verbal threats only

and the spirit of their love and devotion to Husain at once subsided.

Immediately after this event Ibne Ziyad (the son of Ziyad) fell to plan the murder of Muslim. He was informed that Muslim removed himself to the house of Hani, and confirmed this information by sending a spy. The next day he summoned Hani to his court, and with a ceremonial reproof ordered him to submit Muslim to his men. But Hani refused to do so, whereupon he was lashed to bleeding and subsequently put into prison. A rumour spread like wild fire throughout the city that Hani was slain, therefore all the members of his tribe ran up with swords brandishing to revenge Hani's death on Ibn Ziyad. When the attack was known to Muslim he too at once prepared at the head of four thousand people to fight. Ibne Ziyad locked up the doors of the court, and with the help of his archers sent volleys of arrows. The fight waged till sunset, after which the treacherous Koofites retired to their respective houses leaving Muslim all alone.

In short, in the dark, Muslim set down at the threshold of an old woman's hut, and besought her to give him shelter for the night. But see the mockery of fate, the woman was lover of Husain, but her own flesh and blood—her son—was a strange contrast to her. He immediately informed Ibne Ziyad of Muslim's presence at his house. The morning following, Ibne Ziyad sent a huge force of soldiers to arrest him. Muslim was pre-

pared to fight, but the officers in charge implored him not to fight and promised him respect and safety. Muslim, however, reposed his trust in them and accompanied them to Ibne Ziyad, who treacherously put him into prison too.

Once more the peace among Koofites gave way to a general unrest, and ten thousand people attacked Ibne Ziyad finally. But Ibne Ziyad was too cunning for them. He beheaded Hani and Muslim both and tossed their heads down at the insurgents from the roof of the court-building, at the sight of which the fury of the crowd melted into fear and they immediately ran away. Soon after that tragic episode in history followed the murder of Muslim's two sons likewise.

Husain's departure for Koofa.

Although Muslim and his son were killed, Husain was not aware of it. And according to a hopeful letter from Muslim as stated, he had been making preparations for his departure from Mecca to Koofa. Unaware of the ill luck awaiting in his way he set out with almost all the male and female members of his family and relatives, on his journey to Koofa. Only Sughra, Husain's youngest daughter was left behind at Mecca as she was extremely ill and considered to be incapable of accompaniment. Husain cast a final melancholy glance at Ka'aba, bidding it farewell and started off. After several days' continued journey, he came upon that barren deserted tract

which is called Karbala. On his way to it he was enough helpless as not to get the requisite information concerning the tragic death of Muslim. When Koofa was very near the news suddenly broke upon his ears. Upon this Husain intended to return; but another son of Muslim who had not accompanied his father but who had come along with Husain, insisted upon revenging his father's death. Husain had to comply with his request and therefore advanced.

Husain's arrival at the Desert Karbala and prevention of water for him.

He had hardly gone any further, when he met Hurr at the head of a reconnoitering force. Although Hurr was in the service of Yazid, he loved Husain and his relatives very much. He therefore, explained the situation with details to Husain, and requested him to return. Husain too understood it to be expedient and most suitable to the occasion to return. But his return was immediately impeded by the opportune arrival of Oomar, the son of Sa-ad. However Husain reached that region where his and his family's slaughter was fated to occur. The melancholy prevailing threat caused Imam Husain to ask what the place was called. The people informed him that it was called Karbala. At this information the Imam decided to camp there, whereat, Hurr, the son of Riyahi, whose mention I have already made, too pitched down his tents in submission to the orders sent by Ibne Ziyad.

Soon after Oomar Sa-ad also reached there with an overwhelming force under his command, and stationed himself between the Imam and the Euphrates, so that the Imam and his relatives could not get water to drink, which was done in accordance with a similar order received by him from Ibne Ziyad. This preventive order for water to Husain which initiated a rule of terror to prove that "might is everything" existed for three long dry days until the sacred head of Husain fell down to the ground. Syed Ameer Ali describes this scene in his own words. He says: * "No event in history surpasses in pathos the scenes enacted on this spot For days their tents were surrounded; and as the cowardly hounds dared not come within the sword of Ali's son they cut the victims off from the waters of the Tigris. The sufferings of the poor band of martyrs were terrible".

Husain's Pledge.

When the Imam arrived at the desolate field of Karbala, Ibne Ziyad wrote a letter to him, in which he demanded Husain's pledge for Yazid. But the Imam having read it threw it off, as he could not pledge his allegiance to Yazid, and asked the courtier to convey to Ibne Ziyad that he had no reply to it. No sooner did this reply of the Imam reach Ibne Ziyad than he grew more fiery and exasperated. However, as it has been mentioned,

* The Spirit of Islam pages 301 & 302.

Ibne Ziyad sent Oomar-bin-Saad for the forthcoming battle with Husain. Oomar, the son of Sa-ad, had as variably related, at least four or five thousand soldiers with him, among whom were included generally those people who had written letters of invitation to Husain.

When Yazid's force came up for contention, the Imam first set up an explanatory discussion with them just to make them realise that the fault did not lie with him. And this produced the desired effect, for there ensued a pin-drop silence amongst Yazid's men. But unfortunate as they were, not one of them did for once think to come to the Imam's side and win over the Divine pleasure for himself in this world and the world after.

It should be noted in this connection that the explanatory speech of Husain was not due to his feeling of humiliation; rather it was due to shear them of every possible plea that they might put forth before God on the Judgment day.

After this when thirst was no longer bearable for children and other members of Husain's band, the Imam wrote a letter to Oomar-bin Saad requesting him to accept one of the three things as under:—

1. That he should be allowed to go back to Hedjaz, or,
2. That he should be sent to Yazid, or,

3. That he should be allowed to go to -Turkistan so that he should be killed in "Jahaad " against those non-Muslims who ever offended the Muslims on the Persian frontier.

"In a conference with the chief of the enemy he proposed," says *Gibbon, "the option of three honourable conditions: that he should be allowed to return to Medina, or should be stationed in a frontier garrison against the Turks, or safely conducted to the presence of Yazid". Then he goes on further to say: "But the commands of the Caliph, or his lieutenant, were stern and absolute; and Husain was informed that he must either submit as a captive and a criminal to the command of the faithful, or expect the consequences of his rebellion. "Do you think," replied he, "to terrify me with death?"

Ibne Ziyad at first showed inclination to send the Imam to Yazid but Shimr Ziljaushan persuaded him not to carry out his intention until Husain pledged his obedience to Yazid at his hand. So Ibne Ziyad ordered Oomar-bin-Saad in return that if Husain agreed to pledge it was better, if not he should slay him at once. When the Imam was informed of it he refused to have an interview with Ibne Ziyad.

Although Oomar-bin-Saad had sent Ibne

* Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire Vol. V.

Ziyad's letter to the Imam, yet he remained thinking as to what he should do, and ignored the order of his superior to commence battle immediately. Shimr, who was then present there, noticing his deliberate negligence threatened therefore to kill him if he was not prepared to fight with the Imam. But at this insolent meddling of Shimr some thirty "Kofite" lost their mental control, and being utterly aggravated made demand for a reasonable reply, regarding his villainy in not granting one of the three requests the Imam made to him. In default of a satisfactory reply the thirty men at once moved over to Husain's side and fought for him with the result that all of them one after another fell in the battle-field.

Another attempt for Peace.

At last, one day, when the Yazid's soldiers arrayed themselves, the Imam too stood up in a well fallen-in-line of his but few faithfuls against his foes. Oomar-bin-Sa-ad came out of the line and greeted the Imam with the Islamic salute telling thereafter that although he was the only deserving being for the Caliphate, but God didn't prefer to get His mission executed by him; that whatever success his father Ali could attain, he could hardly do; and even his father couldn't obtain anything out of the battles and wars he waged, although he had a much better army at his back to support, and it was out of this that throughout his life he suffered from discomfort

and displeasure and at last gave up his life at the hands of his foes, that his brother Hasan acted more wisely by renouncing the Caliphate, and passed his life with all the happiness possible. At the end Oomar-bin-Saad requested the Imam he should also walk in the wake of his brother by getting himself out of this sticking affair having made a pledge at the hands of Yazid. The Imam at this repeated the above three conditional requests which Oomar-bin-Saad wrote to Ibne Ziyad at various times anew but definitely with no good result.

At last when there was left not a spark of hope from the side of Ibne Ziyad, the Imam commenced to prepare for the inevitable defensive battle. The Imam requested for a day's respite, which was promptly granted. The night was passed in preparation and selection of suitable weapons and later in morning prayers. And when it was morning, the battle drum was beaten.

The Imam got up from his seat, his eyes glistened with tears. He besought others to leave him and go away, as his foes were not thirsty of their blood. But all his companions shouted at once that they were never willing to go away with their lives safe leaving the Imam at the total mercy of his foes.

THE NIGHT OF MARTYRDOM.

Black-robed, bare-footed, with dim eyes that rain
Wild tears in memory of thy woeful plight,

And hands that in blind, rhythmic anguish smite
Their blood-stained bosoms, to a sad refrain
From the old haunting Legend of thy pain,
Thy votaries mourn thee thro' the tragic night
With mystic dirge and melancholy rite
Crying to thee Husain ! Ya Husain !
Why do thy myriad lovers so lament ?
Sweet saint, is not thy matchless martyrhood
The living banner and brave covenant
Of the high creed thy Prophet did proclaim
Bequeathing for the world's beatitude
Th' enduring loveliness of Allah's name !....S. N.

**The commencement of the most
tragic battle in history.**

It was Friday the 10th of Moharram (the first Moslem Lunar month) that the Imam along with his faithful small band came out cap-a-pie into the battlefield against his foes, where firstly on the back of his camel he delivered a sermon in Arabic to the party in front, and then conjured them in the name of God and His beloved Prophet of Arabia not to commit such a horrible deed. The men in front stood dumbounded and made no reply. The Imam receiving no words from the lips of his foes thanked God on the account that whatever he could possibly do to prevent them from the commission of their intended tyranny he tried his level best and that thence-after nothing lay on his shoulder for his life critics in the future to find fault with his attitude which he so generously offered to his foes.

He rode then on a horse, arranged his loving companions' line and a few steps ahead of them waited for the commencement of the battle from his foe's side.

A man, named Abdullah, upon this came up at a gallop on his horse, and seeing a fire kindled around the tent of the Imam for safety said: "Husain, it be announced to you that you have chosen fire for yourself even in this world from now." At this, thirsty Imam prayed to Allah for immediate punishment for the wretch with the result that his horse, to an utter surprise of all, jumped into the fiery trench, where the rider and the ridden both were instantly burnt to ashes.

Immediately after this event Oomar-bin-Saad picked up his arrow and calling others to be his witness discharged the first arrow towards the Imam. When Oomar-bin-Saad gave a start to the battle, two more persons from his side came out and desired somebody from the Imam's side to fight, Hyder-bin-Muthar and Yazid bin-Al-Husain went forth for the contest and slew them in a moment. A state of guerilla warfare continued for some time with single person or in pairs from either side until fifty faithfuls of the Imam went to the isles of the Bliss sending hundred of beastly foes to regions of eternal fire. The Imam looking their corps cried out bitterly and made an appeal to the clusters of beastly forms in front if there was some sensitive soul to feel sympathy for the Prophet's progeny and descendants in the

worst moment of their life. Hur-bin-Yazid-Reyahi, whose mention I have made above, sensed this appeal like 'bolt from heavens on his ears, pierced through his brains right to his hearts. He found that something from inside compelled him beyond control to desert himself from the Yazid's force and join the side of the Imam. Hur, therefore, separated himself along with his companions and made a surprise attack on the Imam's enemies. Most of the enemies were killed at his hand with the result that he succumbed to his wounds at last.

At length from whole band of the faithful the kiths were utterly routed, while the kin only were left as remainder. Out of this reduced band of relations, Ali Akbar, Husain's son was the first and foremost to ask permission for going to the field. With strenuous efforts for control over his heart and brain, the Imam managed to recover his self-control and gave permission to his endeared son to fight, whose face miraculously resembled the Prophet's. To say in brief, the likeness of the Prophet was pierced through with arrows and spears and minced to smallest pieces with an over-whelming attack of swords from all round. Ali Akbar was only eighteen and pen refuses to write and words fail to describe the deathly agony of Fate which the Imam bore at the sight of his beloved, butchered son. Here comes the biggest precedence of endurance and extreme patience which never hitherto occurred in all the ages of the world. Had there been some one else his chest would have been burst

open, and his eyes bled, but it was the person of the Imam that showed the mightiest power of endurance the human world has ever known.

The martyrdom of Ali Akbar followed by those of Qasim Abdullah, the son of Muslim, and Awn and Muhammad, the sons of lady Zainab. Abbas the standard bearer, was killed while making an attempt to bring water from the Euphrates for his beloved kith and kin, and there was left then only the person of Imam Zainul Abedeen, the ill son of Imam Husain who could not assist his father as he was seriously confined to bed.

The Martyrdom of Imam Husain the biggest tragedy the World has ever seen.

So the moment approached, when the Imam Husain had to offer his sacred blood to the thirsty Devil. That Husain, who was heart-beloved to the Prophet was in helpless plight that every inch of the earth below and every span of the sky above seemed to be bearing all the venomous nature against him.

In this *brief history of the bloody affair we are not prepared to paint a parting scene in words and the departing Imam through the portals of the impending battle into the regions of eternity. I rather leave it to the sensitive imagination of

*For the detailed information, read my book "The History and Philosophy of Husain's Martyrdom."

my readers to picture the subtlety exercising agony that the hand of time exercised upon the helpless Husain and his relations. In a word to say Imam Husain too was killed at the merciless hands of his enemies, when he was thirsty for three days with practically no water to drink. Here the human tyranny, utterly exhausted itself, for humanity in men was never gleaming. In fact, they were all a pack of wolves with human appearance, who had either no hearts or with hearts of stone.

Before his slaughter the Imam brought his baby son Ali Asgar and made a pathetic appeal to his foes for water, telling them that if he was faulty in their eyes, at least the babe was quite innocent; but alas! instead of granting some water they sent an arrow which finished the poor, innocent child on his lap.

†Gibbon goes on to describe the position of Husain. He writes: "And, during the short respite of a night, he prepared with calm and solemn resignation to encounter his fate..... Alone, weary, and wounded, be seated himself at the door of his tent. As he tasted a drop of water, he was pierced in the mouth with a dart; and his son and nephew, two beautiful youths were killed in his arms. He lifted his hands to heaven; they were full of blood and he uttered a funeral prayer for the living and the dead."

† The Decline & Fall of the Roman Empire.

Enemy's Ruthlessness.

"In every single combat and close fight the valour of the Fatimides was invincible:" so says *Ameer Ali. "But the enemy's archers picked them off from a safe distance. One by one the defenders fell, until at last there remained but the grand-son of the Prophet wounded and dying he dragged himself to the river side for a last drink; they turned him off with arrows from there. And as he re-entered his tent he took his infant child in his arms; him they transfixed with a dart. The stricken father bowed his head to heaven. Able no more to stand against pitiless foes; alone weary, he seated himself at the door of the tent."

It is historically related that when the Imam was over-wounded and when he felt assured that he would soon succumb to death, he ultimately let himself loose and fell down from the horse.

I again quote the words of Syed Ameer Ali. He writes: "Raising himself for one desperate charge, he threw himself among the Ommeyyads, who fell back on every side. But faint with loss of blood he soon sank to the ground and then the murderous crew rushed upon the dying hero. They cut off his head, trampled on his body, and subjected it to every ignominy in the old spirit of

*Hind. They carried the martyr's head to the castle of Kufa, and the inhuman Obaidullah struck it on the mouth with a cane: "Alas!" exclaimed an aged Mussalman, "on these lips have I seen the lips of the Apostle of God"...It will now be easy to understand, if not to sympathise with, the frenzy of sorrow and indignation to which the adherents of Ali and his children give vent on the recurrence of the anniversary of Husain's martyrdom.

The wretch then hurried towards Husain's tents where a general loot was observed until even the hoods of women were not spared. Shimr would have killed Zainul-Abedeem too but for the intercession of Oomar-bin-Saad.

Later the women with Zainul-Abedeem were removed to Koofa with as much disgrace as possible, where Ibne Ziyad struck the sacred head of the Imam with his stick several times, ordering subsequently for a general display of it through the streets of Koofa. I rather describe this ghastly scene in the words of Washington Irving. He writes:—"†Shimr despatched one of his troops to bear the head of Husain to the emir

*The said Syed has not explained, I pity, the significance of 'Hind'. Most probably, I believe to compare the witch 'Hind, the mother of Moawya who chewed the liver of Hamza, the uncle of the Prophet and the first martyr in Islam. These devil-men of Yazid, here seemed to have renewed the occurrence in the 'old spirit of Hind.'

†Successors of Mohomet Page 212-213.

Obeidullah Ibne Ziyad. He rode with all speed, but arrived at Coofa after the gate of the castle were closed. Taking the gory trophy to his own house until morning, he showed it with triumph to his own house until morning, he showed it with triumph to his wife, but she shrank from him with horror, as one guilty of greatest outrage to the family of the Prophet, and from that time forward renounced all intercourse with him."

The Result of the Slayers of the Imam.

Although fierce and merciless followers of Yazid had killed Husain in his sheer helplessness, but none of them could remain happy as the history tells. With the exception of one or two all of them were killed with great disgrace and torture. Later on the escaped ones also perished. When Mukhtar-bin-Obeid occupied Koofa after his victory he made an official search for Oomar-bin-Saad, Ibne Ziyad, Shimr, Ziyad, Khola and slew them with unimaginable tyranny that a human being can command to act, as the revenge.

The wretch had tried to finish the lineage of Fatimah but Allah filled in the earth with her descendants today. To the contrary no one is present today rightly descending from the slayers of Husain. This reminds one the words of the Holy Quran when it says:—"And do not think Allah to be heedless of what the unjust do." XIV: 42. The Holy Quran.

THE BATTLE OF KARBALA.

- 1 O what a glorious fight they fought,
 Upon Karbala's plain,
The two and se'enty men-at-arms,
 Their leader was Husain !
- 2 From early morn till afternoon,
 Knight after knight fell dead,
All in a glorious heap they lay,
 Their wounded bodies bled.
- 3 Husain looks at the gory heap,
 Alone he mourns o'er all,
Among them some are old, some young,
 And some are children small.
- 4 He feels quite shocked at this sad plight
 Of all his companions
But never does a curse come out
 Of his sweet mouth—not once !
- 5 Alone and solitary he
 Stood there, all, all alone,
He charged and bravely charged again,
 He charged—the foes were gone !

- 6 He casts a glance upon the sky,
He does thoughtful now stand—
Quite starved he was and thirsty too,
His mouth was dry as sand.
- 7 He was full well resigned to Fate,
And full of wounds was he !
He quietly bore the taunts and jeers,
Though in great agony.
- 8 His will was firm and adamant,
Which would not bend at all,
His life—what did he care for it ?
Quite ready for the call.
- 9 As came the call, he answered it,
Promptly, serene, alack !
Laid down his arms, got wounded sore,
Rolled down from horse's back,
- 10 Then Shmr the murderer unsheathed,
His sword—so short and blunt !
Quite slowly, Shmr beheaded him,
Thus finished the Great Hunt !
- 11 Thus passed away from Earth, alas !
The greatest, noblest man,

O what was he ?—this estimate
Just let him form who can.

12 They say he is Redeemer sure !
I do believe in this.

All should believe in such a saint,
Through him, one may reach bliss !

(By S. Amir Ali Masoomi, M. A., B. L.).



Seven Points in Karbala Tragedy

By C. S. Ranga Iyer, Ex-M L. A. Central.

I had dwelt on the religio-historical aspect of the Tragedy of Karbala in my article to the special Moharrum number of "Moonlight" last year. Its Editor asks me to write another article to this year's Special Number. As others will do justice to the political, religious and historical side of Karbala tragedy, I do not propose to tread the same ground. I shall dwell on the seven points of the Tragedy of the Karbala as they strike me :

1. The Tragedy of Karbala brings out the innocence of Imam Husain. His strength was in that innocence. Besides strength, Husain derived his courage from his innocence. Millions weep to-day over his innocence, his honesty and his constancy. Of the goodness of his cause nothing can be more eloquent than the annual celebration of Moharram the world over.

2. Faith is common to all religions. Rationalists who admit the Divine Providence fail to realize Him for lack of faith. Where reason dominates, faith may lack authority. As Emerson said "the faith that stands on authority is no faith." Goethe confessed he wanted faith though

he heard the message. Browning ridiculed a scientific faith as absurd. Sir T. Brown considered those who believed in possibilities as philosophers and philosophy is not faith. Though there is a philosophy about the Tragedy of Karbala, the faith of Husain dominated it. Husain's faith gave him physical and moral courage. Far from stumbling, which is unavoidable for ordinary men whose path is dark, Imam Husain steered his course by the star of hope which guides the humble and the noble who with absolute trust in a merciful Providence venture to do the right.

3. The triumph of Husain was a moral one. His heavenly success lay in earthly defeat. He lost the battle of Kerbala but won the greater battle of Life Eternal. "There is not a fiercer hell", wrote Keats, "than the failure in a great object". Husain knew he would fail judged in a worldly way. That was why he warned off many who would otherwise have stood by him. Those who would not leave him had the vision to see that there was not a lovelier heaven than dying for a great object. That object was clearly proclaimed by Husain before he unsheathed the sword. His so-called defeat in war only made a ship-wreck of what materialists called victory. His was a supreme attempt at deliverance of the world from evil. Such miracles cannot be performed by one who has not a strong will, a stout heart, and a divine inspiration. Imam Husain climbed to the very top of all times because he

had no fear in him. Husain was born great. He achieved greatness. And he thrust greatness on a petty world at Karbala. Without the Tragedy of Karbala, the world would indeed be poorer. Yazid's army was large but its spiritual worth was nil. Yazid had inflicted a deep wound on Imam Husain. It left a scar on the brow of mankind which cannot be erased. Yazidism was, is and will be doomed to perish, although it uprears itself everywhere and at every time. But the life of Husain and the memory of Karbala will always survive Yazid and his wickedness, for God's goodness was Husain's shield.

4. The calm light of Karbala shines to guide erring man through blunders and stupidities, the darkness and confusion of countless years. In the pure light of Husain's sacrifice, man learns to distinguish what is just and holy from what is unjust and folly. After so distinguishing, he pursues truth as best as he can. He fails owing to his limited patience for intelligent man cannot continuously play the ass. Husain's patience was a prayer to providence which moves mountains as it moved him to memorable action at Karbala.

An unfading flower grew in the garden of Imam Husain. Its name was sacrifice. It sends forth through the Karbala tragedy a sweetness and a fragrance which increase with the ages. Sometimes it bloomed into non-violence, sometimes into violence, sometimes both combined.

Imam Husain's life was one of non-violent violence, violent non-violence, impatient patience, patient impatience. Like a monument which no storm can shake, laughing at sorrow, Imam Husain views from on high the errings of erratic mortals and asks them to know and grow wiser, to attain the very pinnacle of perfection which is the glory of Karbala tragedy.

Was not Husain patient? Were not all his honourable suggestions turned down? And yet does it not seem an act of impatience to fight a large army with a handful of men? But Husain lived for the future. He was not an Epicure like Yazid who ate and drank and was merry for he shuddered the next day he would die.

Husain saw with the eye of a seer the future for which he died to live. Indeed Husain's sacrifice has achieved more than Yazid's force. Yazid's life was death. Husain's death was life. Yazid inflicted grief. Husain invited pain with pleasure. His stormy passage into the life beyond brought a living power for ever to dwell among men. He came from God. He went back to God.

The Karbala tragedy is the Divine crown of Husain's life. There died nothing but the wretchedness that belonged to Yazid. From then onward lives the undying righteousness of Husain. When mighty Ceaser fell, Rome was staggered to see him lie so low with all his conquest and spoils shrunk to that little measure. But when

Husain fell, he completed his conquests by establishing beyond reproach his cause. His glories and triumphs are proclaimed to-day from one end of the earth to the other but spiders weave their webs where Ceaser ruled. That is all the difference between a worldly Ceaser mighty as he was and a Divine one without his seeming might.

As for Yazid, he had neither the power nor the grandeur of Ceaser. Whatever power he had only extirpated the humane in him. Husain opposed the power with which Yazid had bought the base, ingoble crowd of his day. Without a name, Yazid and his crowd have faded. To-day we see how petty was Yazid's might, because Husain's fight was for the barest right. Materialism must in the long run quail before spiritualism. Husainism is only another word for spirituality.

5. In Yazid's life time, his power swayed but in the life of mankind Husain's eternal spirit sways. Short-lived was Yazid's glory. Husain is to-day a deity to emulate whereas Yazid a demon to shun.

Husain has become an ideal because of his sacrifice. The Tragedy of Karbala has made him an immortal heir of universal praise.

Kings and generals have flourished and faded. Their wealth has become clay. Their name has not survived their day. But the name

of Husain is familiar in every month as a household word.

Politicians and leaders have their passing paragraphs of newspaper praise only to be forgotten. Imam Husain is remembered because he had not passion for leadership or common martyrdom. The uncommon instinct of that great soul was to sacrifice his life for truth, fair-play and tolerance.

6. The most striking lesson from the Karbala tragedy is the triumph of right in a spiritual sense. There was not a more stainless soldier than Imam Husain. Whatever fails, whoever falls, Husainism will continue to conquer. Rousseau described the principle of human justice as the love of men derived from self-love. Husain vindicated that principle on a spiritual and human plane. True man-love which is God-love replaced self-love in his case. His was just because his heart was untainted.

7. Like him each of his seventy-two true adherents had a pure and brave heart as his breast-plate. Truth and justice were the guide of these seventy-two staunch followers who recognized no other sovereign on earth but Imam Husain. Over the Tragedy of Karbala preside honour and valour, king and queen of virtues. Thrice happy were these seventy-two faithful soldiers because they found that the equal balance of justice poised their Master's mind. And was

there ever a greater master mind or a master-builder than Imam Husain ?

Lastly, the moving loyalty of those seventy-two men who unflinchingly stood by Husain to the very last is the finest in the Karbala tragedy. Grand was their devotion, great their discipline. Such discipline and devotion alone can close the miserable human chapter of brutal butcheries and bring the golden age for which men must fight, as Husain fought, all force and fraud—

Till the war-drums throb no longer and
the battle-flags are furled

In the Parliament of Man the federation
of the world.

(M. R.)

Lesson from the Tragedy of Kerbala.

By Dr. Baron Rolf Ehrenfels, Austria.

The hero and the saint; two fundamental types of human endeavour and progress are again and again in the foreground of cultural evolution.

The Western world is more inclined to hero-worship; the Eastern world used to prefer the saintly type. The hero is victorious in the struggle against his temporal adversaries; the saint wins the battle against mental foes within his own soul.

Sometimes both types are represented in one and the same individual as e. g. in the cases of Prophet Mohammed (Peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him) Lord Krishna, or Rama, are also in the case of Emperor Akbar. Sometimes the great personalities of history or religion, definitely belong to one of the aforementioned types.

Imam Husain can be said to be one of the most clearly pronounced prerepresentatives of the saintly type, who suffered defeat and forcible death in this transitory world and who fulfilled the spirit of self-sacrifice to the utmost in order to

achieve eternal victory in the other world, with the crown of martyrdom.

Thus it is really the idea of self-sacrifice which firstly becomes apparent in the history of this great personality. Above this, it is the trust in the still higher importance of the hereafter, as compared to this transitory world, which characterises the martyrdom of Kerbala.

This is the moral side of the event, which is celebrated in the Moharram-mourning and which is of paramount importance, especially in these days!

Our period is characterized by the international exchange of thoughts and ideas; good as well as bad.

It is the natural effect of world-wide expansion of thoughts, that they are often propagated in a deteriorated, or at least in a very rude form. Thus we shall not be astonished, when the formerly kinghtly idea of true heroworship, is, at the present time lowered to mere flattery of the successful and prosperous ones. The weakness towards temporary success, the bowing before worldly splendour, in one word: the arrogance of "Might is Right," can rightly be said to be one of the most demoralizing sides of the present Western influence on the East, which in other respects, has many good points.

The superb teaching of the martyrdom of Imam Husain, on the other hand, will effectively counter balance this evil influence, if Muharram is really understood as the great memorial, not only of self-sacrifice, but further of the firm faith in the greater reality of spiritual victory, as compared to physical, of the eternal truth, as compared with transitory semitruths.

This, I think, is the great lesson which, if rightly understood, Muharram can and must teach its knowing celebrants, in our period of human evolution.

(M. R.)

Hence vain deluding Joys!

The brood of folly without father bred
How little you bested,

Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys!

(Milton)

Pleasure is frail like a dewdrop!

While it laughs it dies,

But sorrow is strong and abiding,

Let sorrowful love wake in thy eyes.

(Tagore)

“ Husain is King and King of Kings,

Religion, and Religion's shield,

He give his head, but not his hand

In homage to the harsh Yazid :

In truth, he is the saviour of the Muslim Creed.”

(Khawaja Muinuddin Chishti)

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